

# Jimmie Heuga Nomination

Nominated by:  
**Sigrid Noack**  
**Jane Wyckoff**

## *Hannah Nishimoto*

Hannah Nishimoto clearly embodies the spirit of the *Jimmie Heuga Award*, having “made a significant contribution to disabled skiing...and been an inspiration to others”. She has been doing everything imaginable to help persons with disabilities to believe in themselves by believing in this motto: “If I can do this, I can do anything!”

Hannah is a PSIA certified ski instructor for Visually Impaired and Developmentally Disabled persons, and has been teaching skiing in many different organizations. She has been an active member of The Unrecables, LA Chapter of Disabled Sports USA for 26 years. As equipment manager for many years, she assures that the equipment, such as, bi skis, mono skis, outriggers, etc. is ready and safe for club participants, and is transported to the slopes and then back to the equipment shed. She attends all monthly ski trips, except when dates conflict, and she is taking veterans to the Winter Sports Clinic! Hannah also coordinates the ski schedule, assigning students with appropriate volunteer instructors and handles necessary medical, emergency and liability release forms. She also organizes the club sponsored Saturday evening dinner for students, their families and volunteers, where the day’s skiing videos are enjoyed by all.

For all of her service to the club, Hannah has received the Unrecables’ recognition as Woman of the Year several times and last year was honored as LA Council’s Woman of the Year.

Hannah has been a volunteer downhill instructor at the Department of Veteran’s Affairs Winter Sports clinic, held in Colorado, for over 25 years. Besides her work at this clinic, Hannah has been coordinating trips at the VA in West Los Angeles for over 15 years for disabled veterans to participate in the VA Winter Sports Clinic. Through her efforts, over 300 veterans have been able to participate. These trips require fund raising, preparation of veterans for this event, and the coordination of all the paperwork and applications required to participate. Hannah also has been locating donors to assist with getting jackets for her team of participants. These activities have been a life changing event for veterans who are able to look beyond their disabilities, to focus instead on their abilities.

Hannah has been a volunteer downhill instructor for the New England VA Winter Sports held at Mount Sunapee, New Hampshire for the past 9 years. She has volunteered for the VA Summer Games held in San Diego at the surfing venue. Hannah has also been a volunteer official for the VA Golden Age Games, the VA Senior Olympics, held in various states around the US, officiating in a variety of summer sports. For several years, Hannah also served in the Army, in the WAC Women’s Army Corp.

In past years, Hannah worked as a counselor, Unit Director and later as Camp Director at Camp Paivika, a camp for disabled children and adults in the San Bernardino Mountains, now organized by Ability First. Hannah is currently a part of the Paivika Champions, raising funds needed for the campers to enjoy camp. Last year’s winner of the Jimmie Heuga Award was Hannah’s camper, when she was 13 years old.

Hannah continues to volunteer for fund raising activities, not only for her many adaptive programs, but also for her church, where she assists with the annual rummage sale supporting the Over 80 Lunch program. Hannah actually started volunteering early in life, as Water Safety Instructor, life guarding for many Girl Scout events and programs, and she served as counselor at Camp Go Seek before starting her work with the disabled population.

Hannah has been breaking down barriers and redefining limits for persons with disabilities. It is most appropriate that Hannah be recognized for her unselfish dedication to the disabled and wounded; and for her leadership in this most important arena of caring for those most in need. We believe that Jimmie Heuga would be proud of Hannah!

